

will join with me today in wishing Dr. C. Delores Tucker, Burt Siegel, Operation Understanding, and George Ross the very best in their continued service to the Philadelphia community.

CONTINUE ISOLATING MOBUTU

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 11, 1995

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I recently engaged in an exchange of letters with the State Department concerning the need for the United States to maintain its policy of diplomatic isolation against Africa's longest reigning and most corrupt dictator, President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,

Washington, DC, August 17, 1995.

Hon. WARREN CHRISTOPHER,
Secretary of State, Department of State, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SECRETARY: It has come to my attention that the Administration may seek the assistance of President Mobutu of Zaire in providing Zairean troops to address security concerns along Zaire's borders with Rwanda and Burundi. I oppose such a move.

I agree with you concerning the seriousness of the security situation in Eastern Zaire and its connection to the incipient civil war in Burundi and the threat of renewed civil war in Rwanda. I also understand that the international community has made a commitment to the Government of Rwanda to address the security issue. I support that commitment.

But I do not believe that engaging the assistance of President Mobutu is a constructive way to address the security issue, for two reasons.

First, on a practical level, this step is more likely to exacerbate the security situation than improve it. Zairean forces in the border regions have been smuggling arms and providing resources and protection to the ex-Armed Forces of Rwanda. The population in Eastern Zaire is sympathetic to the Hutu cause. It is doubtful that Mobutu has the capacity to improve security in Eastern Zaire.

Second, seeking Mobutu's support sends exactly the wrong message to Zaire. Mobutu will use this appeal to claim legitimacy. For many years, during the Cold War, Mobutu posed as a "friend of the West" in order to gain Western acquiescence and support for his corrupt regime in Zaire. I fear that the proposed initiative will reinvigorate this charade. The outcome will be that Mobutu will be less likely to work with Prime Minister Kengo and the various opposition forces in facilitating a democratic transition in Zaire.

Mobutu's exit from the political scene is necessary to resolve Zaire's political crisis. To that end, I continue to support a policy of isolating Mobutu and denying him a legitimate role in international affairs. For these reasons, I do not believe the United States should have any role in seeking his help to address the deteriorating security situation in Eastern Zaire and along Zaire's border with Rwanda and Burundi.

I look forward to your reply.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

LEE H. HAMILTON,
Ranking Democratic Member.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, DC, September 25, 1995.

Hon. LEE H. HAMILTON,
House of Representatives.

DEAR MR. HAMILTON: I am responding to your letter of August 17 to the Secretary recording your opposition to seeking President Mobutu's assistance in providing Zairian troops to address security concerns along Zaire's borders with Rwanda and Burundi. We have no intention of conferring "legitimacy" on President Mobutu. We agree that this would seriously weaken our policy to support the transition to democracy in Zaire.

Contrary to recent press reports, the U.S. has not approached Mobutu for assistance with the refugee crisis and security in eastern Zaire. Our contacts were exclusively within cabinet ministries, particularly the prime Ministry and Foreign Ministry. It is correct that the United States, acting with its Troika partners (France and Belgium), has in the past not excluded outright any possibility of conversation with President Mobutu. You may recall, however, that Mobutu refused to receive the Troika representatives when its members wished to present a joint demarche regarding obstacles to the transition to democracy in April.

Regarding your concerns that Zairian forces are unlikely to improve the security situation in eastern Zaire, UNHCR notes that the elite Zairian security contingent operating in the camps under its auspices has performed professionally and had a demonstrably positive effect on camp security, to the pleasant surprise of many observers of the region. We agree, however, with your concern about indiscipline among Zairian forces generally, which is exacerbated when their salaries are not paid. (UNHCR pays the salaries of the troops seconded to its camps.) The performance of the non-UNHCR troops during the recent (now-suspended) forced repatriation was certainly of concern.

More generally, we would note that the focus of our Zaire policy remains support for the democratic transition and efforts toward economic reform. We continue to view Mobutu as the principal obstacle to democratic and economic reform in Zaire. The presidential proclamation barring those who obstruct democracy in Zaire from entering the U.S. would continue to apply to Mobutu should he request a visa. In this connection, however, we must take into account our obligations as host country to the United Nations. If Mobutu wishes to attend the 50th anniversary ceremonies this fall (as we expect he will), he would be permitted to come to the United States for that purpose.

We appreciate your interest in Zaire policy, and hope that this information will be helpful to you. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have further questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

WENDY R. SHERMAN,
Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs.

CENTRAL SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY SALUTES TOP FIVE BUSINESSES

HON. GEORGE P. RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 11, 1995

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, there is a program which involves constituents in my district which is worthy of note. In its fourth year, the Top Five program has become established as a local award that truly recognizes the best of the best in central San Joaquin Valley business.

The sponsors are: Baker, Peterson & Franklin, Certified Public Accountants; California State University Business Center; and the Fresno Business Journal.

The purpose of the Top Five is to provide the opportunity for successful companies and business leaders to interact with each other, and to stimulate businesses to persist in their efforts to redefine and reshape relations with their employees, their customers, and their communities in ways that promote the welfare of all.

The Business Journal goes on to state that the 1995 Top Five awards showcase outstanding private companies whose innovations and achievements have made a special contribution to the valley. This year, 41 businesses were nominated from a broad coverage area of Fresno, Madera, Mariposa, Kings, and Tulare Counties, with a significant number of finalists hailing from the mountain communities. Types of businesses represented by applicants range from manufacturers to services, and business sizes range from a handful of employees to nearly 1,000.

The five winners who were honored at a reception were selected by an independent panel of respected business and professional leaders. They are:

Danish Creamery Association whose CEO is James A. Gomes. Danish Creamery is one of Fresno's oldest businesses and has received many medals attesting to the association's commitment and quality. It employs 130 people.

Heidi's 1-Hour Photo in Mariposa. The owner is Heidi Vetter. She employs 6 others who offer photo finishing. Heidi has also added a custom-framing shop which allows her to process film into a family treasure hanging on the wall.

Inland Star Distributing Centers, Inc. Michael Kelton, who is president has a staff of 10. Inland Star began in 1981 as a local, single-site, public warehouse. It is now a national, five-site, full-service distribution organization.

Ruiz Food Products, owned by Fred Ruiz employs 775 people. Ruiz Foods is a multi-million-dollar business that was recently listed No. 26 among the top 500 Hispanic-owned businesses nationwide. It, today, is the largest burrito manufacturer in the United States.

Sierra Press, Inc., in Mariposa employs 5 people. Jim Wilson is the CEO. The business was cofounded by Mr. Wilson and Jeff Nicholas. Sierra Press has built a devoted customer base through its unique approach to book publishing. They specialize in photographic scenes and memories of America's national parks.

Once again, congratulations to all the companies who participated this year.

TRIBUTE TO LINDA OVERMOYER

HON. JOSEPH M. McDADE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 11, 1995

Mr. McDADE. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to Ms. Linda Overmoyer. On Tuesday, October 24, 1995, Ms. Overmoyer will be officially honored at the annual conference of the National Industries for the Blind [NIB]. Please join me in applauding Ms. Overmoyer